

## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO: Drought Task Force**

**FROM: Herb Guenther, Chairman**

**RE: Proposed Approach for Drought Task Force Activities  
(For Discussion)**

**DATE: May 8, 2003**

### **I. Proposed Outcomes:**

A. Potable/emergency water plan for this summer – This component will expand on existing Department of Emergency Management procedures, updated in coordination with other agencies and expanded to include the items identified in the Executive Order. Focus is on protecting life and health. It will address both concentrations of individual potable wells and centralized water distribution systems.

B. Statewide conservation strategy – The conservation approach will focus on education, assistance and technology transfer and will build on existing programs and expertise within the state. It will contain a public education media campaign (depending on availability of funds). The conservation effort will include the evaluation of efficiency improvements for agricultural and municipal water use.

C. Long-term drought plan - This is the centerpiece of the effort, focused on putting in place a long-term statewide strategy for preparing for and responding to drought that links current drought response capabilities (including drought plans of individual water providers) to expanded programs in specified areas. We will expand on approaches used by other states by including an adaptation component (to limit vulnerability to future droughts) as well as monitoring, assessment and response components. The long-term drought plan will include municipal and industrial water supply, range management and livestock, wildlife and wildlife habitat, and fire suppression components. This effort is expected to take at least a year, possibly longer. The Plan will include specified activities/responsibilities and triggers for Monitoring, Assessment, Response and Adaptation related to drought. To the extent that not all issues are resolved, the Task Force can recommend items for further study. The long-term drought plan will require an ongoing commitment from participating agencies, stakeholders and the public.

### **II. Approach:**

Plans and procedures should be as simple as possible. We should maximize public input but minimize meetings, and build on work that has already been done throughout the state. This will mean having email and phone input, several well-publicized meetings of the Task Force itself, and when we have a draft of the long-term plan, soliciting input

through open meetings in various communities throughout the state. A web-based information site for use by the public is also proposed but is not yet available.

Responsibilities for managing the three program components are:

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| 1) Potable/short term emergency plan:           | Mike Austin (with Darrell Jordan)  |
| 2) Long-term drought plan                       | Kathy Jacobs (with input from all interested parties and staff program leaders)  |
| 3) Conservation plan and efficiency evaluations | Margie Risk (with input from SRP/CAWCD/Water CASA/AMWUA/city conservation coordinators, Bureau of Reclamation, rural conservation specialists including Agricultural Extension, NRCD's etc.) |

Long-Term Drought Plan components and efforts are:

- Design of potable/emergency water plan (short-term plan)
- Developing the overall monitoring, assessment and response approach for the short and long-term plans, including identifying and working with individuals and groups who will be assigned responsibilities in these areas
- Coordinating with the existing watershed groups and communities that have historically had drought related issues
- Ensuring meaningful public and stakeholder participation
  - agriculture (primarily irrigated agriculture);
  - wildlife, habitat and rangeland management (including livestock);
  - fire managers (working with the State Forester);
- Identifying water sources and transportation needs;
- Designing a sustainable long-term process for drought planning
- Integration of climate science and new data sources
- Integration with federal agency activities
- Integration with conservation activities
- Identifying legislative needs (if any)
- Identifying funding sources to support drought planning activities

The Executive Order refers to the potential to establish Work Groups. Other than the three group efforts identified in the three program areas listed above, we won't establish work groups at this time but may do so in the future if the need arises. Public meetings will be held to discuss and develop individual plan components as needed.

#### **IV. Task Force Mechanisms:**

All Task Force recommendations will be forwarded through the Task Force to the Governor by the Director of DWR. The Task Force will be asked to strive for agreement on the recommendations, but if this is not possible, a majority recommendation will be forwarded along with a list of concerns.

Membership on the Task Force will be limited to those agencies listed in the Executive Order. Certain individuals, agencies and others with technical expertise will be asked to participate on a non-voting but technical support basis, and may be asked to make presentations or develop white papers to enhance the Task Force's understanding of drought impacts, adaptation and mitigation options.